

**MINUTES OF THE POULSBO LOCAL MEETING OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
September 27, 2006**

The local jurisdiction meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission was called to order at 9:00 a.m., on Wednesday, September 27, 2006, at the Northwest Design Center & Furniture Gallery Seminar Room, 18850 State Highway 305, Poulsbo, Washington.

Commissioners present at the meeting were: Chair Dick Ford, Ed Barnes, Bob Distler, Elmira Forner, Carol Moser, Dan O'Neal and Dale Stedman.

CHAIRMAN WELCOME AND COMMISSION INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Ford opened the meeting with introduction of Commissioners and welcomed state representatives and local officials.

Representatives Beverly Woods and Sherry Appleton welcomed the Commission to Kitsap County.

OVERVIEW OF LOCAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Mayor Kathryn Quade, City of Poulsbo, welcomed the Commission to Poulsbo. She emphasized that the biggest problem that the city has is a lack of funds for interior roads. The city has moved towards more creative ways of developing transportation funding through alternative means. She emphasized that Poulsbo is one of the fastest growing cities in the county, does not have funds to plan any new roads, but does have the ability to widen and address safety issues. Any new funding for local jurisdictions to fund projects would be appreciated.

Councilman Ed Stern, City of Poulsbo, spoke to the entire state's transportation funding issues. He expressed that old things need to be done in a new way.

Councilman Jim Henry III, City of Poulsbo, expressed that when population gets ahead of transportation you experience congestion issues. Transportation funding issues are statewide, and it's important to find the need and focus on it.

OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

Charlie Howard, Director of Transportation & Planning, Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), provided an overview of Puget Sound and statewide population growth. He explained that PSRC's growth management strategy, Vision 2020, is an overarching vision that integrates growth management, as well as economic and transportation goals.

Ben Bakkenta, Principal Planner, PSRC, provided an overview of the framework for the regional growth plan that includes an urban land and services plan that will efficiently improve access to services and housing choices. The purpose of the Vision 2020 update is to conduct a regional conversation about our future, refine the vision for regional growth,

and revise multi county planning policies and provide a framework to coordinate resources and fund regional needs. PSRC has looked at four regional growth patterns in draft Environmental Impact Statements, where growth targets are extended to metropolitan, larger and smaller cities. These targets build on existing local comprehensive plans, employment, population and 2025 projections.

Mr. Howard discussed passenger-only ferry key issues and provided brief explanation of current and potential routes. In January 2007 PSRC will begin a passenger-only ferry study with the assistance of a consultant that will look at investments, integration of other modes of transportation and address impacts at ferry terminals. The study is expected to be completed by the summer of 2008.

Mike Chapman, Chair, Executive Council Peninsula RTPO, emphasized that there are three important issues for those that live on the peninsula; the availability of rural transit and the maintenance and improvement of the three in and out local routes; US 101, the Hood Canal Bridge and SR 3 to SR 16.

Patrick Babineau, Peninsula RTPO Coordinator, explained that the RTPO is looking at five focus areas and tying those into the regional transportation plan. Mobility in and out of the area is very important.

STATE TRANSPORTATION ISSUES AND PROJECTS IN THE REGION

Randy Hain, Regional Administrator, Olympic Region, WSDOT, provided an overview of local active transportation projects in the region. He also shared information regarding priority recommendations for safety and bottleneck/chokepoints from the Peninsula RTPO, and the Department's 10-year project programming for the Olympic Region and Kitsap County.

STATE FERRY SERVICE IN THE REGION

Ray Deardorf, Planning Director, Finance, WSF, provided background on ferry service in Kitsap/Central Puget Sound. He noted that WSF is the largest ferry system in the United States and plays a major part in serving communities and travelers in King, Snohomish, Pierce and Kitsap Counties. WSF also serves as a major transit system for commuter traffic in Central Puget Sound carrying vanpools, carpools and bicycles. He touched on deficiencies at the Bainbridge Island Ferry Terminal and the Eagle Harbor Maintenance Facility. The Department coordinates extensively with other regional entities to bring all parties together in planning and policy issues. He explained that WSF is in a difficult financial situation since the Legislature ended support from motor vehicle tabs in 2000 following Initiative 695. The operating expense environment is complicated by high fixed costs and more pressure from security costs and high fuel prices, along with lagging investment in terminal upgrades and new vessels, as well as looming needs that must be met to sustain service. A study underway by the Joint Transportation Committee is seeking ways to provide a sustainable funding scheme for State Ferries operations and capital needs.

PASSENGER ONLY FERRY SERVICE

Richard Hayes, Executive Director, Kitsap Transit, presented a proposal for plan changes for passenger only ferries. The proposal adds cross-sound passenger ferry services to Kitsap Transit's array of services. These vessels will be built with a combination of grants and local tax dollars, will be fuel efficient and fast with low-wakes, and meet the need for additional mid-day and weekend service. Startup service will operate using six 149-passenger vessels, eventually going to a smaller, more efficient, eighty-passenger vessel when demand dictates.

KITSAP REGIONAL COORDINATING COUNCIL

Mary McClure, Executive Director, Kitsap Regional Coordinating Council, shared that the region is home to the third largest naval base in the nation, is bridge and ferry dependent and the gateway to the Olympic Peninsula. She emphasized that the County is neither fully urban nor suburban, but not rural either. Local transportation needs have been identified and the Council has worked diligently to find all funding sources that are available. The Council is closely connected with both PSRC and the RTPO to aide in the creation of a consistent transportation system. Over the last fifteen years the Council has grown and has a diversified membership throughout the county that includes City Council members, tribal members and local officials.

PUBLIC AND LEGISLATOR COMMENT PERIOD

Ken Attebery, Port of Bremerton, thanked the Commission for coming to Kitsap County.

Paul Locke, citizen, shared his concerns regarding transportation spending.

Merrill Robison, citizen, commented regarding the draft ferry plan.

Kelly Clotfelter, citizen, shared his concerns regarding ferry fares.

Tim Caldwell, General Manager, Port Townsend Chamber of Commerce, shared that the Chamber is supportive of the Kitsap Transit proposal.

Tom Waggoner, citizen of Kingston, shared a newspaper article with the Commission regarding travel to Seattle via car, ferry and bus.

Bill Knobloch, Councilmember City of Bainbridge Island, shared that he is an advocate of LEV-X due to the costs and benefits.

Alice Tawresey, Chair, Tariff Policy Committee, commented regarding passenger-only ferry service and commuter discounts during peak hours.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m., September 27, 2006.

WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DICK FORD, Chair

ELMIRA FORNER, Vice-Chair

EDWARD BARNES, Member

CAROL MOSER, Member

DAN O'NEAL, Member

ROBERT S. DISTLER, Member

DALE STEDMAN, Member

DOUGLAS MACDONALD, Ex-Officio Member
Secretary of Transportation

ATTEST:

REEMA GRIFFITH, Executive Director

DATE OF APPROVAL